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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/065,594	11/01/2002	William W. Rowley	39288-0131	4200
24115	7590	02/05/2004	EXAMINER	
BUCKINGHAM, DOOLITTLE & BURROUGHS, LLP			BOCHNA, DAVID	
50 S. MAIN STREET			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
AKRON, OH 44308			3679	

DATE MAILED: 02/05/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/065,594	ROWLEY, WILLIAM W.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	David E. Bochna	3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-68 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 1-36 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 37-58 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 59-68 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 59-68 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected method, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 4.

Specification

2. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

The phrase "The invention relates generally to" should be removed from the abstract.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the subject matter of claims 8, 13-16, 19-22, 25-28, 31-34 and 58 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 37-39, 43-44 and 57-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stickler.

In regard to claim 37, Stickler discloses a connector, which comprises a hollow polymeric tube 12 having two ends 28;

a pair of oppositely facing connector means 36 at each end of the tube, each connector means having an associated fastening means 42, 50; and

at least one third connector means 40' on the tube internal of the part of oppositely facing connector means 36 at each end of the tube and the associated fastening means, the at least one third connector means 40' having an associated fastening means 56.

In regard to claim 38, at least one of the pair of oppositely facing connector means and at least one of the third connector means further comprises an end, a sealing surface 36 adjacent the end, and a shoulder 38 adjacent the sealing surface.

In regard to claim 39, both of the pair of oppositely facing connector means and at least one of the at least one third connector means further comprises an end, a sealing surface adjacent the end, and a shoulder adjacent the sealing surface.

In regard to claim 43, at least one of the sealing surfaces is of a different geometry from the other sealing surfaces (40' is different from 36).

In regard to claim 44, the different sealing surface is the sealing surface of the at least one third connector means.

In regard to claim 57, the at least one of the pair of oppositely facing connector means at each end of the tube further comprises an internally threaded connector means 42.

In regard to claim 58, at least one of the pair of oppositely facing connector means at each end of the tube further comprises an externally threaded connector means 46.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 40-42 and 45-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stickler.

In regard to claims 40-42 and 45-56, Stickler does not disclose having two three or four one third connector means. However, it would have been obvious to add additional connectors means 28 to tube 12, where the tube end 36 is different for the other sealing surfaces, because duplicating the components of a prior art device is a design consideration within the skill of the art. In re Harza, 274 F.2d 669, 124 USPQ 378 (CCPA 1960).

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 1-36 are allowed.

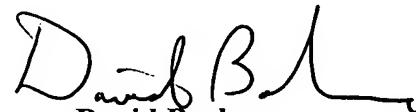
Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Rowley, Johnson, Hashimoto, Bloom, Conlin, Howe, and Witham all disclose similar connectors common in the art.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David E. Bochna whose telephone number is (703) 306-9040. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30 Monday-Thursday and every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne H. Browne can be reached on (703) 308-1159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.


David Bochna
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3679
January 28, 2004